

UNCLASSIFIED

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Page: 1

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 06856 182238Z

62
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-13 AID-05 PC-01 /084 W
----- 115758

R 182040Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7588

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Excluded: () In Part (☒) In Full DECON

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason

~~SECRET~~ BUENOS AIRES 6856

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM, ASEC, AR
SUBJECT: MILITARY CLUB BOMBING AND OTHER TERRORIST ACTS

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 6841; (B) BUENOS AIRES 6834

DECONTROL

1. A POWERFUL BOMB EXPLODED IN THE ARMY'S CIRCULO MILITARY OFFICERS CLUB AT 0005 HOURS OCT 17, WOUNDING AT LEAST 50 PERSONS, MOSTLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, IN THE CLUB CINEMA (SEE REF A). INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY, DEFENSE MINISTER JOSE MARIA KLIX AND FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF EDMUNDO OJEDA VISITED THE BUILDING LATER THE SAME DAY.

2. ACCORDING TO AN ARMY COMMUNIQUE ISSUED OCTOBER 17, THE BOMB CAUSED ONLY INJURIES MOSTLY TO MARRIED WOMEN AND CHILDREN, BUT COULD HAVE RESULTED IN MANY DEATHS. "THIS NEW ACT OF BARBARITY BY AGENTS OF SUBVERSION SHOWS THEIR TOTAL LACK OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE AND CAN ONLY CAUSE CONSTERNATION AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE A GENUINE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS," SAID THE COMMUNIQUE.

3. (A LIST OF THE INJURED WAS NOT RELEASED AND AUTHORITIES WERE INSISTENT THAT THERE WERE NO FATALITIES IN THE EXPLOSION. IT IS BEING RUMORED AROUND TOWN, HOWEVER, THAT PERSONS WERE ACTUALLY KILLED IN THE BLAST AND MANY MORE PERSONS

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 1

UNCLASSIFIED

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Current Class: [REDACTED]
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1976BUENOS06856

Page: 2

Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200000044

[REDACTED]
PAGE 02 BUENOS 06856 182238Z

WOUNDED, BUT THAT THE MILITARY HAS DECIDED TO SUPPRESS THE MAGNITUDE OF THE CASUALTY LIST IN ORDER NOT TO GIVE SATISFACTION TO THE TERRORIST PERPETRATORS. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM THESE RUMORS.)

4. ELSEWHERE DURING THE WEEKEND, PRIVATE CARS AND BUSES WERE HIT WITH EXPLOSIVES, AND ANONYMOUS THREATS OF BOMBS IN DOWNTOWN PUBLIC MOVIE THEATERS EMPTIED MANY THEATERS. (AN OFFICIAL U. S. EMBASSY CAR WAS ONE OF THOSE DAMAGED BY A BOMB -- SEE REF B. THE EMBASSY DRIVER WAS NOT HURT.) THE BOMBING ATTACKS WERE DOUBTLESS IN COMMEMORATION OF PERONIST LOYALTY DAY OCTOBER 17.

5. COMMENT. OCCURRING JUST DAYS AFTER HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICIALS HARGUINDEGUY AND TUCUMAN GOVERNOR ANTONIO BUSSI BOLDLY ANNOUNCED IN SEPARATE SPEECHES THAT THE FIGHT AGAINST THE TERRORISTS WAS ALL BUT WON, SATURDAY'S AUDACIOUS BOMBING IN THE OFFICERS CLUB CAME AS A RUDE REMINDER THAT IT WASN'T OVER YET. THE ABILITY OF TERRORISTS TO PENETRATE A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND THEIR READINESS TO ATTACK EVEN WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE A PARTICULAR AFFRONT TO THE MILITARY, AS WAS LAST JULY'S SPECTACULAR BOMBING OF FEDERAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS, IN WHICH 32 PERSONS WERE KILLED. SUCH TERRORIST ATTACKS INCREASE THE SECURITY FORCES' BITTER RESENTMENT TOWARD OUTSIDE CRITICISMS OVER HUMAN RIGHTS. ESPECIALLY AS THEY BELIEVE THAT OUTSIDERS CHOOSE TO IGNORE THE BRUTAL VIOLENCE PERPETRATED BY TERRORIST GROUPS. AND, INDEED, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORT IN ARGENTINA IF CONCERNED GROUPS IN THE U. S. WOULD CONDEMN SUCH UNCIVILIZED ACTS AS THE BOMBING OF THE CIRCULO MILITAR IN THE SAME WAY THEY CONDEMN BRUTAL ACTS ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT. IN THE PAST, INCIDENTS OF SUCH MAGNITUDE HAVE LED TO RETALIATION AGAINST TERRORISTS AND SUSPECTED TERRORIST PRISONERS. ALTHOUGH THE MOST RECENT INCIDENT--THE BOMBING OF A POLICE BUS KILLING 16 IN ROSARIO IN SEPTEMBER--WAS APPARENTLY NOT FOLLOWED BY RETALIATORY VIOLENCE, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW THE MILITARY--ONCE AGAIN CHALLENGED CLOSE TO WHERE THEIR FAMILIES AND HONOR ARE AT STATE--WILL REACT THIS TIME.
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Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 2

UNCLASSIFIED